



State of Washington

15-PASSENGER VAN DRIVER SAFE DRIVING PRACTICES ACKNOWLEDGEMENT STATEMENT

Definition: 15-Passenger Van Driver - Fifteen (15)-passenger van driver refers to employees, student-employees, students, and volunteers operating 15-passenger vans under the direction of a state agency, university, or community/technical college. All Washington state agency, university and community/technical college 15-passenger van drivers are required to complete this form prior to **initial** operation of a 15-passenger van. A copy of the signed form will be maintained on file with the agency, and a copy provided to the driver.

Risks Associated with Operating a 15-Passenger Van

1. Washington State law requires seat belt use. The 15-passenger van driver must ensure all passengers have buckled their seat belt prior to moving the van.
2. Fifteen-passenger vans have a rollover risk similar to other light trucks and vans.
3. The risk of rollover increases dramatically as the number of occupants is increased **from** six to nine. Fifteen-passenger vans should be loaded by filling the **front seats first**.
4. The weight of the van, particularly when fully occupied, causes the center of gravity to shift rearward and upward increasing the likelihood of rollover.
5. The shift in the center of gravity will also increase the potential for loss of control in panic maneuvers.
6. The weight of the van when fully occupied requires additional stopping distance, an especially important factor in rain, fog, or other difficult driving situations caused by weather conditions.
7. The width of the van allows for less lane room.
8. The length of the van increases distance needed for making turns, changing lanes, and braking.
9. General maintenance of the vehicle, including proper tire pressure is important to safety, and can be referenced in the vehicle owner's manual.

Considering the above described van characteristics, safe operation of vans increases when drivers apply the following **SAFE DRIVING PRACTICES**:

- Adhering to posted speed limits.
- Adjusting to lower speeds than posted during conditions of rain, snow, fog, or other conditions that affect visibility, stopping distance, or general safe handling of the vehicle.
- Minimizing potential driver distraction by using cell phone or other electronic devices when the van is safely stopped, asking passengers to assist with calls when needed, etc.
- Properly loading passengers and equipment, and never placing equipment on the top of vans.
- Minimizing driver fatigue on long trips by one or more of the following: driving rested, taking appropriate breaks, or sharing driving with authorized drivers.
- Not using alcohol or drugs, including prescription medicine that warns of drowsiness or similar effects.

* I have read and understand the possible risks involved while operating a 15-passenger van. (Initial) _____
* I am aware the handling characteristics of a 15-passenger van may change dramatically, especially when fully loaded. (Initial) _____
* I understand that extra caution is required when operating 15-passenger vans. (Initial) _____
* I understand that seatbelt use by driver/passengers in 15-passenger vans is mandatory at all times. (Initial) _____

Driver's Name (print): _____ Date: _____

Driver's Signature: _____ Agency/Section: _____